

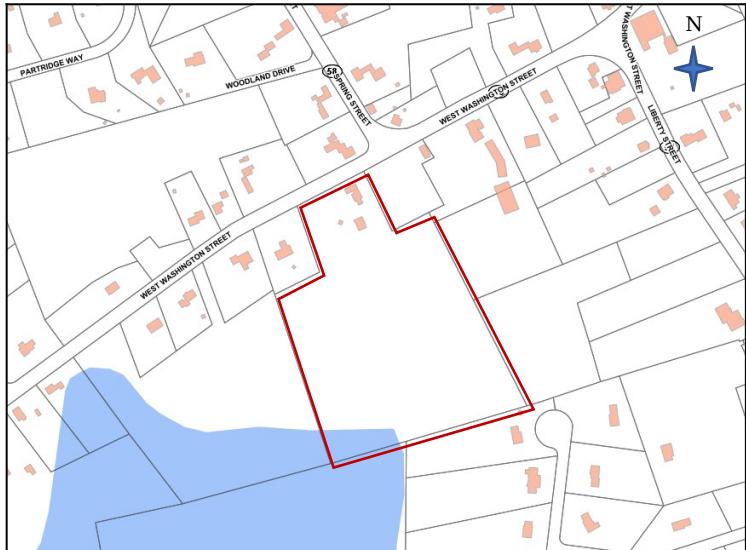
FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL
COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Photograph



Locus Map



Recorded by: Lara Kritzer, JM Goldson
community preservation + planning

Organization: Hanson Historical Commission

Date (month / year): June 2018

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form
Number

92-0-20-0

Hanover

HNS.259

Town/City: Hanson

Place: (neighborhood or village):

Address: 15 West Washington Street

Historic Name: Cornelius and Betsey Cobb House

Uses: Present: Single-Family Residential
Original: Single-Family Residential

Date of Construction: ca. 1804

Source: White's History, Plan 2 No. 58

Style/Form: Federal

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Stone

Wall/Trim: Wood Clapboard/Wood

Roof: Asphalt Shingle, metal

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
Barn to south of house and stone wall along West Washington Street

Major Alterations (with dates): One and two story additions to the south façade, vinyl replacement windows, alterations to front entrance and entry porch

Condition: Good

Moved: no

yes **Date:**

Acreage: 11.10 Acres

Setting: Located on one of Hanson's main thoroughfares outside of one of its commercial centers in an area of predominantly single-family homes ranging from early eighteenth century farmhouses to late twentieth century suburban development on large lots which includes grass lawns and numerous mature trees, bushes, and other vegetation.

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Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

The two-story Federal style house has a low, nearly flat hip roof that is flanked by tall, rectangular, parged chimneys which extend from the edge of the roof on either end. The house has a rectangular footprint which has been extended to the south under a two-story gable roof which has lower one-story additions to its south and west facades. On the north façade, the front entrance has been extended forward into a wide entrance porch. The house is wood clapboard sided with wide wood corner boards and narrow cornice boards that are stacked below the heavy, projecting wood board surrounded eaves. The windows have narrow wood frames and the frames of the second floor windows extend up into the cornice on all sides. The double hung windows themselves have all been replaced with six-over-one vinyl windows.

The house faces north towards the road and has a symmetrical front façade with two double hung windows on each floor to either side of the projecting center entrance. A fifth window is centered above the entrance porch, the hip roof of which begins just below the center of the window. The hip roof extends out on all sides around the wide wood cornice of the entrance porch. Within the porch, approximately two-thirds of the space has been enclosed with wood clapboard siding with a double hung window located on its east and west facades. The rest of the porch is open and the front corners are supported by round wood columns with narrow capitals and bases. The door is a solid wood panel door with two panes of glass on top which opens onto a narrow concrete stoop with steps leading into the grass lawn.

The east façade has two double hung windows on each floor of the original hip roofed section of the house. To the south, the roof line drops down several feet to the gable roof of the two-story addition. The east façade of the addition is flush with the east façade of the original house, with the exception of the eaves which extend out from the façade. The eaves are narrower than those found on the main house and the addition lacks the decorative cornice details as well. A third tall, wide, parged chimney extends up through the center of the roof along the east façade. Three double hung windows are located below the eaves on the second floor of the house. On the first floor, a pair of windows to the left of a side entrance which has a solid wood door behind a storm door. A third window is located on the first floor to the right of the entrance.

The west façade of the original house is identical to the east façade. The rear addition, however, is set well back from the west façade of the original house. The shallow metal roof of the two-story section of the house is visible in the southwest corner of the house over a shed roof that extends across a one-story addition to its west façade. Double hung windows line both floors and a side entrance in the one-story addition provides access to a large wood deck that runs from the middle of the addition to the south. The wood deck is unpainted and its western edge is even with the west façade of the house. From that side, a set of stairs leads to the driveway and the entire deck is surrounded by wood railings with square balusters. A wood frame for a porch roof or awning extends across the south end of the deck in front of the one-story addition at the southern end of the building.

A driveway runs along the west façade of the house to a small, two-story barn that is located to the southwest of the house. The barn has a cupola centered on its gable roof ridge with louvered sides, a tall, pyramid shaped roof, and a weathervane. A pair of barn doors is located at the center of the north façade below a long divided light transom window. To either side of the doors are double hung windows with decorative board style shutters.

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A tall wood picket and rail fence surrounds the yard to the front and east of the house. The fence has square posts topped with finials and a gate on the north property line across from the front door. A wood trellis with a solid wood gate is located between the west façade and the driveway. Dense vegetation extends behind the fieldstone wall which runs along the street to the west of the driveway and helps to screen an unpaved parking area at the center of the driveway's west side. Ornamental bushes and trees are also located in the yard in front of the house and more trees run along its east property line.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

According to White's History of Hanson, this house was built for Cornelius Cobb in March 1804. Cornelius Cobb (1775-1833) was born to Cornelius Cobb and Grace Eames in what is now Hanson and married Betsey Thomas (1778-1863) in Pembroke in 1801. Cobb owned a store near the intersection of Spring Street and West Washington Street (then Willow Street). White's History explains that Cobb would walk to Hingham to catch a boat to Boston to order goods, then would hire a neighbor to drive his oxen team to Boston and bring a load which always included a hogshead of molasses, a barrel of new rum, a large box of brown sugar, and West Indies goods. Over time, Cornelius Cobb acquired a great deal of the surrounding land, and the 1830 Smith Plan shows Cobb as the owner of three adjacent buildings on West Washington Street which presumably included the current house, his store, and a barn or other outbuilding. The 1856 Walling Map shows only one building owned by the Cobbs, where Mrs. B. Cobb lived at the time. The property eventually passed to their son, Theodore Cobb (1804-1889), who was married to Sarah Harlow Perkins(1816-1904), daughter of Nancy Harlow and Moses Perkins of Minot, Maine. Theodore is listed in state and federal censuses as a farmer from 1850 through the 1880s, and the family store appears to have been sold to Cyrus Drew, who had his own store adjacent to the Cobb family home by the 1850s.

Theodore and his family lived on the Cobb farm with his mother until her death in 1863, after which the land was transferred to Theodore. Theodore and Sarah had two children – Theodore Junior, who died at the age of two, and Grace Cobb (1842-1904) who worked as a teacher before marrying another teacher, Otis Lafayette Bonney, in Hanson in 1867. Otis L. Bonney (1837-1922) was the son of Ezekial Bonney and Angeline Dean White of Hanson. He is listed as a school teacher through the 1870 U.S. Census, but by 1880 was working as an attorney at law. Grace and Otis moved in with Theodore and Sarah after their marriage and continued to live there for the rest of their lives. Grace Cobb Bonney inherited the property from her father, and Otis inherited it after Grace's death in 1904. Otis was remarried in 1906 to Grace G. Luther (1867-1943), and the two continued to live in the Cobb family homestead. Otis had no children in either of his marriages. After his death, the property passed to his wife, Grace Luther Bonney, who continued to live in the house and worked as a secretary in the Town library through the 1930 U.S. Census. After her death in 1943, the property was inherited by her sisters, Ada Hemmenway and Lucy Pratt, who sold the property in 1944 to Alexander J. and Evelyn Brennan of Malden.¹

Alexander Brennan had worked as a salesman in Malden. The Brennans lived at 15 West Washington Street until 1984, when they sold the house to John and Leslie Hamilton.² The Hamiltons lived there only three years before selling it to John and Donna Alexander III, who in 2014 sold it to Kevin McReynolds.³ The house was sold to its current owners, Kevin and Emer McDonough, in 2015.

¹ Plymouth County Registry of Deeds, Book 1873, Page 244

² Plymouth County Registry of Deeds, Book 5574, Page 403

³ Plymouth County Registry of Deeds, Book 8220, Page 160; Book 44277 Page 248

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National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form

Check all that apply:

Individually eligible Eligible **only** in a historic district
 Contributing to a potential historic district Potential historic district

Criteria: A B C D

Criteria Considerations: A B C D E F G

Statement of Significance by _____ Lara Kritzer

The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.

The ca. 1804 Federal style house is eligible for individual listing on the National Register under Criteria A for its association with the early settlement of Plymouth County and Massachusetts, and more specifically with development of the village of North Hanson, and Hanson overall. The house is also eligible under Criteria C as it has survived in one of only a limited number of Federal style houses still standing in Hanson and has retained its original location, setting and architectural character intact despite over two centuries of use. The house embodies the distinctive character of early nineteenth century construction and is an example of how New England homes were often enlarged over time to meet the needs of their residents. Additional information on the building's interior will also be needed for the Massachusetts Historical Commission to substantiate its National Register eligibility.